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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 002261

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SUBJECT: NATO SYG RACE: SPECULATION ABOUT CANADIAN DEPUTY
PM MANLEY

REF: USNATO 832

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Brian Flora,
Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: While NATO has never before had a non-European Secretary General, the name of Canadian Deputy Prime Minister John Manley has now surfaced as a possible candidate. While we do not have a sense for what Manley's prospects are in Brussels, we expect that he would jump at the chance to serve in this prestigious position. The GoC will be seeking U.S. and European views on a Manley candidacy, and Manley may want to discuss the NATO SYG position during an upcoming visit to Washington (date tbd).
END SUMMARY.

2. (U) The Canadian press reported on August 8 that Deputy PM Manley is being considered as a potential successor to Lord Robertson as NATO Secretary General. Manley, who is on vacation, has not yet made any public statement concerning a potential candidacy. Manley's spokesman said that the Deputy PM "is not campaigning for this. He's not a candidate. This idea did not come from us. It's coming out of Brussels and we're not going to speculate on it any further."

3. (C) Manley, who dropped out of the Liberal Party leadership race on July 22, in fact told the Ambassador on July 28 that he was exploring the possibility of becoming NATO SYG. The timing would work well for Manley, as Paul Martin (the prohibitive favorite to replace PM Chretien) is expected to form a new Cabinet when he becomes Prime Minister sometime in the December 2003 - February 2004 timeframe. Manley has expressed interest in serving in a Martin Government, but Martin's plans are unclear and Manley certainly would not have the vast portfolio he has held over the past year under Chretien. In addition to being Deputy Prime Minister, Manley is Finance Minister, Political Minister for Ontario, and oversees the sensitive U.S./Canada border file.

4. (C) Manley did a solid job overall during two years (2000-2002) as Foreign Minister, and shifted Canada's foreign policy away from Lloyd Axworthy's "human security" agenda and toward stronger partnership with the U.S. During his leadership candidacy, Manley called for reforming and bolstering the United Nations. He is steeped in the Liberal Party's multilateral tradition, but he has publicly rejected the anti-American attitudes of some Liberals, including in the aftermath of the Iraq War. According to unconfirmed press reports, Manley was one of the Cabinet members who supported Canadian participation in the war but were overruled by Chretien.

5. (C) Manley has worked closely with Homeland Security Secretary Ridge to make the U.S./Canada border more secure

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and more efficient in the wake of September 11. On the defense front, Manley has admitted that Canada is not pulling its weight, and in his only budget as Finance Minister he approved a significant increase in military spending. Manley has called for Canadian participation in North American missile defense, and negotiations over a U.S.-Canada cooperation agreement are ongoing.

6. (C) Manley has not weighed in personally on some of the key issues confronting NATO, but the GoC shares our commitment to NATO remaining the pre-eminent security organization in Europe and has the same concerns as we do about competing EU efforts (reftel). Canada supports NATO transformation, including creation of a NATO Response Force, and is open to NATO taking on out-of-area missions (as in Afghanistan, where NATO leadership is facilitating Canada's large contribution to ISAF).

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